

Today's News - Wednesday, November 18, 2009

- Goldberger and Gardner have two very different takes on Nouvel's new Manhattan tower: one cheers "the art of the façade" (and the interiors are great, too); the other finds it proof that NYC "is the place where some of the world's best architects come to create some of their dullest buildings."
- Pearman finds Hadid's Maxxi "mesmerizing" - "old-school Zaha, still with echoes of her early built projects" (in a neighborhood formerly of interest only to soldiers and architecture buffs).
- Farrelly wonders if the "ongoing trickle" of "tinkerings" to the Sydney Opera House gives Utzon "the last laugh after all": some parts "are quite nicely done, in a sensible-shoes sort of way."
- Utzon fil is very pleased with the results - and thinks his father would be, too: "even icons have to move with the times."
- H&deM's grand plans for Lord's cricket grounds in London are "spectacular" and "breathtaking" (lots of pix).
- Calgary picks three finalists to vie for new pedestrian bridge: the selections signal it will be a "less out-there design" than Calatrava's neighboring Peace Bridge.
- Hawthorne compares, in urban and architectural terms, the Beverly Hills and Santa Monica sites that could be home to Broad's new museum.
- Hume cheers KPF's new Toronto office tower: "a complex of rare elegance" that "represents a genuine act of city-building, not just another tower."
- Anderton chats with experts and architects about whether architecture can change the perception, and practice, of policing; Keenen Ivory Wayans' sustainable supersized (16,000sf!) house; and the case for an Eli Broad art museum in Santa Monica.
- Poland's foreign minister calls for the demolition of the Polish Palace of Culture and Science: the communist-era monolith is very expensive to maintain, "colossally wasteful of energy," and too expensive to renovate (Warsaw would be better off with a park in its place).
- Rockwell tapped a second time to design sets for the 82nd Academy Awards.
- 'Tis the time of year when everyone makes lists: The most original offices around the world (some surprises); 50 Best and 5 Worst Inventions of 2009 (some familiar, some not); 10 Green Startups to Watch (some very interesting building materials).
- Call for entries:
- Transform interiors of the former Commonwealth Institute for London Design Museum (must play nice with Rem, we assume).
- 2010 Metropolis Next Generation Design Competition: One Design Fix for the Future (nice cash prize for "one small (but brilliant and elegant) fix").
- ASLA 2010 Professional & Student Awards.

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Surface Tension: Jean Nouvel and the art of the façade. When you catch your first glimpse of 100 Eleventh Avenue...The building clatters; it jangles like a bracelet...it looks like a vast, reflective Mondrian...If you are tired of the way every modern building feels flatter and thinner than the one before it, well, so is Jean Nouvel. By Paul Goldberger- New Yorker

Fogging up the vision machine: Jean Nouvel shows that NYC is the place where some of the world's best architects come to create some of their dullest buildings...great thought and effort...applied to the southwest façade...the back appears to have been at best an afterthought. But perhaps for that very reason, the back is so much better and so much more original than the front... By James Gardner [image]- The Real Deal (NYC)

Twist and Shout: Zaha Hadid's new MAXXI centre for contemporary art in Rome...is ultra-bespoke, hand-crafted, its sinuous tendrils of concrete beautifully finished and the quality of its interweaving interiors mesmerising. By Hugh Pearman -- Pier Luigi Nervi; Renzo Piano [images]- RIBA Journal (UK)

Still waiting for that moment, or did Utzon have the last laugh after all? ...almost as breathtaking, is the irony by which Utzon's rejection of pompous form, and his embrace instead of a naturist functionalism, led him to forfeit functionality...inherent in the glorious idea...is the irony, for this is what modernism said it would never, ever do; promote form over content. By Elizabeth Farrelly- Sydney Morning Herald

Even icons have to move with the times: Like any architect, my father viewed his great building within the longer arc of history. He realised that for it to remain relevant, it had to adapt to modern challenges...There will always be a small group which believes certain buildings should remain frozen in time. The reality is that buildings evolve. By Jan Utzon -- Joern Utzon- Sydney Morning Herald

Spectacular Lord's redevelopment will provide entertainment for all seasons: Grand plans for the home of cricket are breathtaking -- Herzog & de Meuron [images, links]- The Times (UK)

Calgary, B.C. designs chosen as finalists for East Village pedestrian bridge: ...selections signal it will feature a less out-there design than Calatrava's spiralling red Peace Bridge downtown. -- RFR/Halsall Associates; Falco Schmitt Architects/ARUP; Buckland and Taylor/Kitchell [images]- Calgary Herald (Canada)

For Eli Broad, a tale of two sites: How do those sites compare in urban and architectural terms as potential locations for the museum building Broad is planning, for which he is likely to enlist a prominent architect? I visited both spots to produce this brief comparative sketch. By Christopher Hawthorne- Los Angeles Times

The (welcome) return of the office tower: RBC Centre...a complex of rare elegance. It also happens to be a thoroughly urban addition to the streetscape and the skyline, one of those exceptional developments that work both as a landmark and a place to be...represents a genuine act of city-building, not just another tower. By Christopher Hume -- Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF); Bregman and Hamann [image]- Toronto Star

DnA/Frances Anderton: Welcoming Police Stations and Keenen Ivory Wayans' Sustainable Supersize House: Can architecture change the perception, and practice, of policing? ...the case for an Eli Broad art museum in Santa Monica. -- AC Martin Partners; Perkins+Will; Gruen Associates; Carde Ten Architects; WWCOT- KCRW (Los Angeles)

Call for demolition of Polish Palace of Culture and Science: Stalin-era building...is very expensive to maintain...communist-era monolith...colossally wasteful of energy...it would be much better "to have a park, with a pond, where the inhabitants of Warsaw could go for a picnic." -- Lev Rudnev (1955) [image]- BBC

David Rockwell to design Oscars set: ...has signed on to be the production designer for the 82nd Academy Awards in Los Angeles for the second year in a row...- United Press International (UPI)

The most original offices around the world -- Frank Gehry; Rimas Adomaitis Urmas; James Law Cybertecture; Enric Miralles/Benedetta Tagliabue/EMBT; Earl Swensson & Associates (ESa); Meyer & Van Schooten; Kohn Pedersen Fox (KPF); Sanjay Puri; Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA); Andrew Bromberg/Aedas; Richard Rogers [slide show]- Le Journal du Net (France)

The 50 Best Inventions of 2009 + The Five Worst Inventions: The Solar Shingle; The Living Wall; Vertical Farming; Dandelion Rubber; etc. [images]- Time Magazine

Call for entries: London Design Museum begins quest for design team to transform Parabola: An international search for a designer to transform the interior...at the former Commonwealth Institute building in Kensington...pre-qualification questionnaires must be made by December 4.- Culture24

Call for entries: 2010 Metropolis Next Generation® Design Competition: One Design Fix for the Future: provide one small (but brilliant and elegant) fix - leading to an incremental (or dramatic) change in sustainability; cash prize; deadline: January 29, 2010- Metropolis Magazine

Call for entries: ASLA 2010 Professional & Student Awards; registration deadlines: February 12, 2010 (Professional Awards); May 29, 2010 (Student Awards)- American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)



-- Tadao Ando: Punta della Dogana, Francois Pinault Foundation, Venice, Italy
-- Book: "Eye of the Leopard" by Dereck Joubert & Beverly Joubert

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